DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 236 338 CE 037 373

AUTHOR Bowe, Frank
TITLE Demography and Disability: A Chartbook for Rehabilitation.
INSTITUTION Arkansas Univ., Fayetteville. Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center.
SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Handicapped Research (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE [83]
GRANT G00830010
NOTE 30p.
AVAILABLE FROM Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, Publications Dept., P.O. Box 1358, Hot Springs, AR 71901 (Item No. 1219--$4.00).
PUB TYPE Statistical Data (110) -- Information Analyses (070)

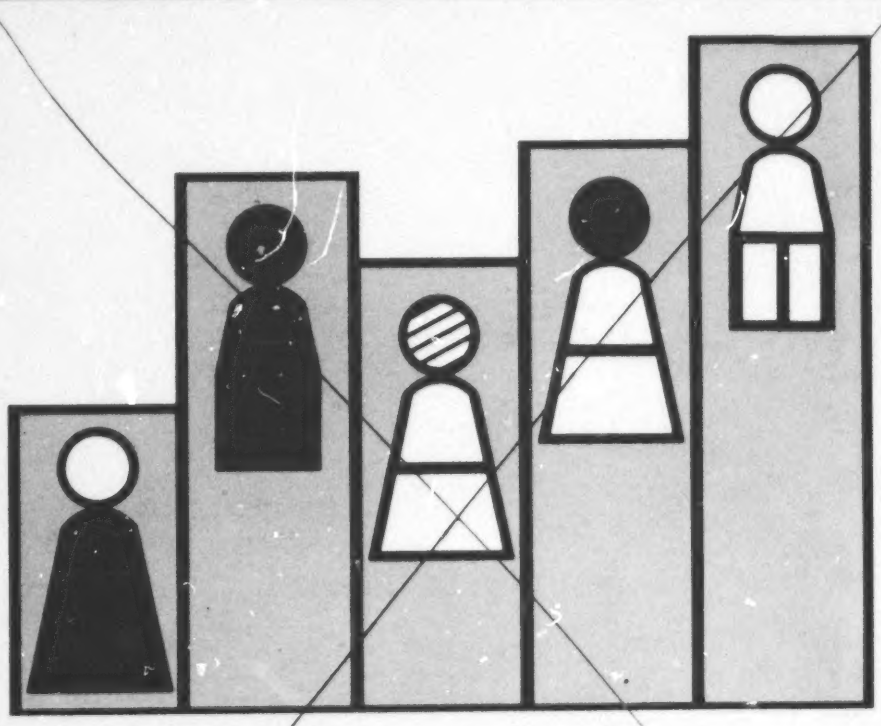
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Demography; *Disabilities; Educational Attainment; *Educational Needs; Employment Level; Employment Patterns; Geographic Distribution; Geographic Location; Income; *Individual Characteristics; Needs Assessment; *Program Administration; Program Effectiveness; Salary Wage Differentials; School Role; Tables (Data); *Vocational Education; *Vocational Rehabilitation
IDENTIFIERS *Current Population Survey

ABSTRACT

Based on data concerning disabilities that were obtained from the 1981 and 1982 Current Population Surveys (CPS), it appears that the average working-aged disabled American is about 50 years old, has a high school education, is not in the labor force, and subsists on a low level of income. Also evident is the fact that disability is much more common among Blacks than among Whites or Hispanics, more common among males than among females, and more common among persons with low education and income levels than among those with higher levels of schooling and income. Furthermore, disabled persons tend to reside in the South. These data have a number of implications for vocational rehabilitation program administrators. For example, rehabilitation should place more emphasis on recruiting those persons who become disabled while working into the federal and state partnership program and should begin to provide more service for older disabled individuals. For most disabled persons of working age, the major need is for retraining rather than for basic training. Particularly in need of training are women and Blacks with disabilities. Perhaps the most encouraging news from the 1981 and 1982 CPS is that full-time employed disabled persons earn almost as much as do full-time workers with no disabilities. (MN)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED236338



Demography and Disability: A Chartbook for Rehabilitation

Frank Bowe

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center
University of Arkansas
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

2

About the Author

Frank Bowe, Ph.D., L.L.D., is Visiting Professor, University of Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center, and author of **Handicapping America, Rehabilitating America** and **Comeback,** all published by Harper & Row, among numerous other books. He is also the author of the four publications by the President's Committee cited on the endpage.

Demography and Disability:
A Chartbook for Rehabilitation

Frank Bowe

0037373

Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center
University of Arkansas
Arkansas Rehabilitation Services

Preface

The U.S. Bureau of the Census began including questions about disability in its highly respected Current Population Survey (CPS) studies in 1981. Designed to estimate the nation's unemployment rate, the CPS is conducted monthly; the disability questions are asked each March.

This publication of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RT-13) highlights key findings from the 1981 and 1982 CPS March studies.

The data tell us about persons **aged 16-64, not in institutions, who reported one or more disabilities** to census interviewers. We learn that the average working-age disabled American, representing rehabilitation's target population, is about 50 years of age, has a high-school level of education, is not in the labor force, and subsists on a low level of income. We see, too, that disability is much more common among blacks than among whites or Hispanics, more common among males than among females, and more common among persons with low education and income levels than among those with higher levels of schooling and of income. We find, as well, that disabled persons tend to reside in the Southern quarter of the country.

What does all this mean for rehabilitation?

That is a question for program administrators and leaders to answer. Some suggestions are offered in the final section of this chartbook.

Certainly, there are implications for client outreach and recruitment, priority for service, client training, professional and peer counseling, independent living services, placement, post-employment services, and employer relations. The Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center is engaged in an ongoing program of employment-related research and training under Cooperative Agreement G00830010 between the National Institute of Handicapped Research (NIHR) in the U.S. Education Department, the University of Arkansas, and the Arkansas Division of Rehabilitation Services.

This publication is one of the first products of that agreement. The Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center plans to issue further reports and sponsor relevant training over the course of the next five years.

Vernon L. Glenn
Director, ARR&TC
Fayetteville, AR

Adults
Aged 16-64 and Not in Institutions

The "typical" working-age American:

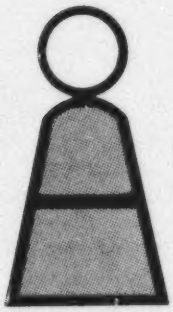
is a female
is 34 years of age
is a high-school graduate
is married
is in the labor force
works full-time
had about $8,000 in income from all sources in 1980

The "typical" working-age disabled American:

is a male
is 50 years of age
is a high-school graduate
is married
is not in the labor force
does not work full- or part-time
had about $5,000 in income from all sources in 1980

Source: 1981 CPS

Disabled
Adults Aged 16-64 and Not in Institutions



The "typical" working-age disabled woman:

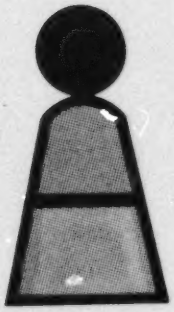
is 51 years of age
completed eleventh grade
is married
is not in the labor force
does not work full- or part-time
had less than $3,500 in income from all sources in 1980
earned $5,335 if employed in 1980
earned $10,569 if employed year-round full-time in 1980

The "typical" working-age disabled man:

is 49 years of age
completed eleventh grade
is married
is not in the labor force
does not work full- or part-time
had less than $8,000 in income from all sources in 1980
earned $12,579 if employed in 1980
earned $18,755 if employed year-round full-time in 1980

Source: 1981 CPS

Minority-Group
Disabled Adults Aged 16-64 and Not in Institutions



The "typical" working-age disabled black:

is a female
is 42 years of age
has a tenth-grade education
is not married
is not in the labor force
does not work full- or part-time
had less than $3,000 in income from all sources in 1980

The "typical" working-age disabled Hispanic:

is a female
is 40 years of age
has a ninth-grade education
is married
is not in the labor force
does not work full- or part-time
had more than $3,500 in income from all sources in 1980

Note: Earnings data of satisfactory reliability are not available for disabled blacks or Hispanics

Source: 1981 CPS

Nondisabled
Adults Aged 16-64 and Not in Institutions

The "typical" working-age nondisabled woman:

is 33 years of age
is a high-school graduate
is married
is in the labor force
works full- or part-time
had $7,000 in income from all sources in 1980
earned $7,771 if employed in 1980
earned $12,021 if employed year-round full-time in 1980

The "typical" working-age nondisabled man:

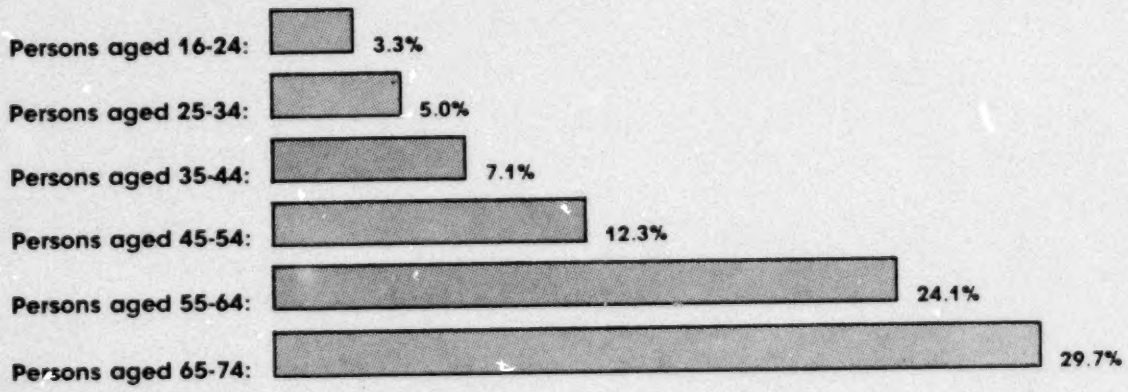
is 35 years of age
is a high-school graduate
is married
is in the labor force
works full-time
had $13,000 in income from all sources in 1980
earned $16,367 if employed in 1980
earned $20,644 if employed year-round full-time in 1980

Source: 1981 CPS

Size of the Population

All Persons, 16-64	**147,306,000**
Disabled Persons, 16-64	**13,102,000**
Disabled Blacks, 16-64	**2,214,000**
Disabled Hispanics, 16-64	**696,000**

About one American of working-age in every eleven has a work disability. The rate varies very sharply by age, however. It is highest among persons over 65 who are not "of working-age."



Source: 1982 CPS

Other Major Characteristics of the Population

1. **Unemployment.** In March, 1982, the official unemployment rate among disabled males was 16.9%; that among disabled females, 18.3%. At that time, nondisabled males had a rate of 10.2% and nondisabled females 8.8%.

   Unemployment was very high among younger disabled working-age individuals: 30.9% for males aged 16-24, and 25.5% for females in that age range. The rates were lowest among older disabled persons: 7.3% for males and 13.5% for females aged 55-64.

2. **Poverty.** In 1981, 26% of disabled persons aged 16-64 lived in poverty. They represented 20% of all persons of working-age having incomes below the official poverty line.

   Among disabled blacks of working-age, 50.6% were below the poverty line; among black disabled women of working-age, the proportion in poverty was 58%.

3. **Social Security Income.** A total of 30.4%, or 3,978,000 reported receiving Social Security income. That was 46.4% of all working-age persons receiving such aid in 1981.

4. **Medicaid.** One in five working-age disabled persons (19.8%) reported coverage by Medicaid. These 2,599,000 persons constituted 36.7% of all working-age Medicaid recipients.

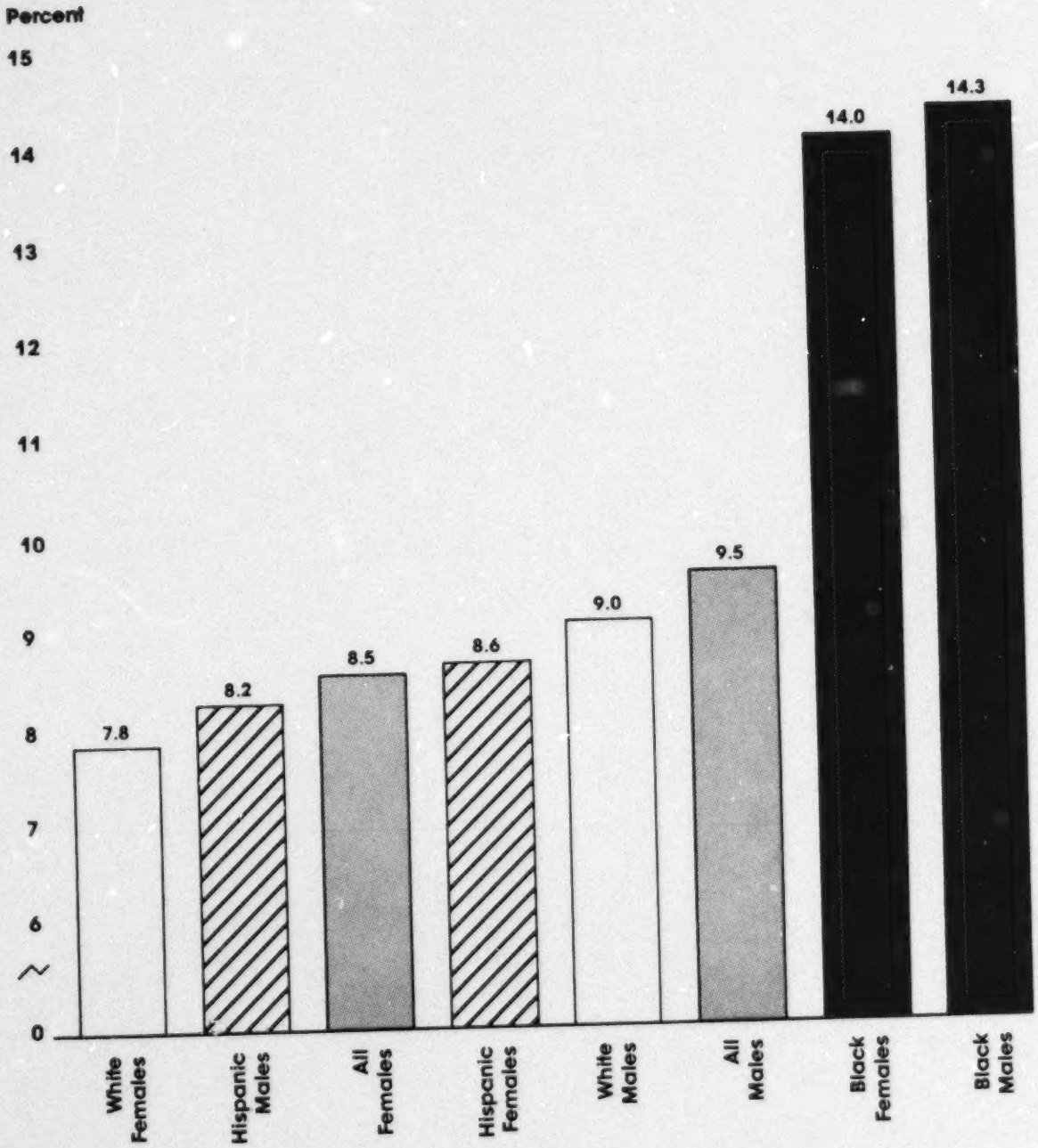
5. **Food Stamps.** Living in a household receiving food stamps were 20.8% of all working-age disabled persons. These 2,730,000 persons represented 22.6% of all working-age persons living in such a household.

6. **Public Housing.** Twenty percent (20%) of all working-age persons residing in public housing were disabled. These 505,000 individuals constituted 4% of the disabled population aged 16-64.

   Fewer disabled persons resided in subsidized housing. A total of 1.6%, or 217,000 disabled individuals of working age lived in such housing. Still, they represented 21.9% of all working-age persons residing in subsidized housing.

7. **Families.** Most working-age disabled persons lived in families. Fully 81%, or 10,609,000, lived with their families, usually with a spouse. Another 13.9% lived alone.

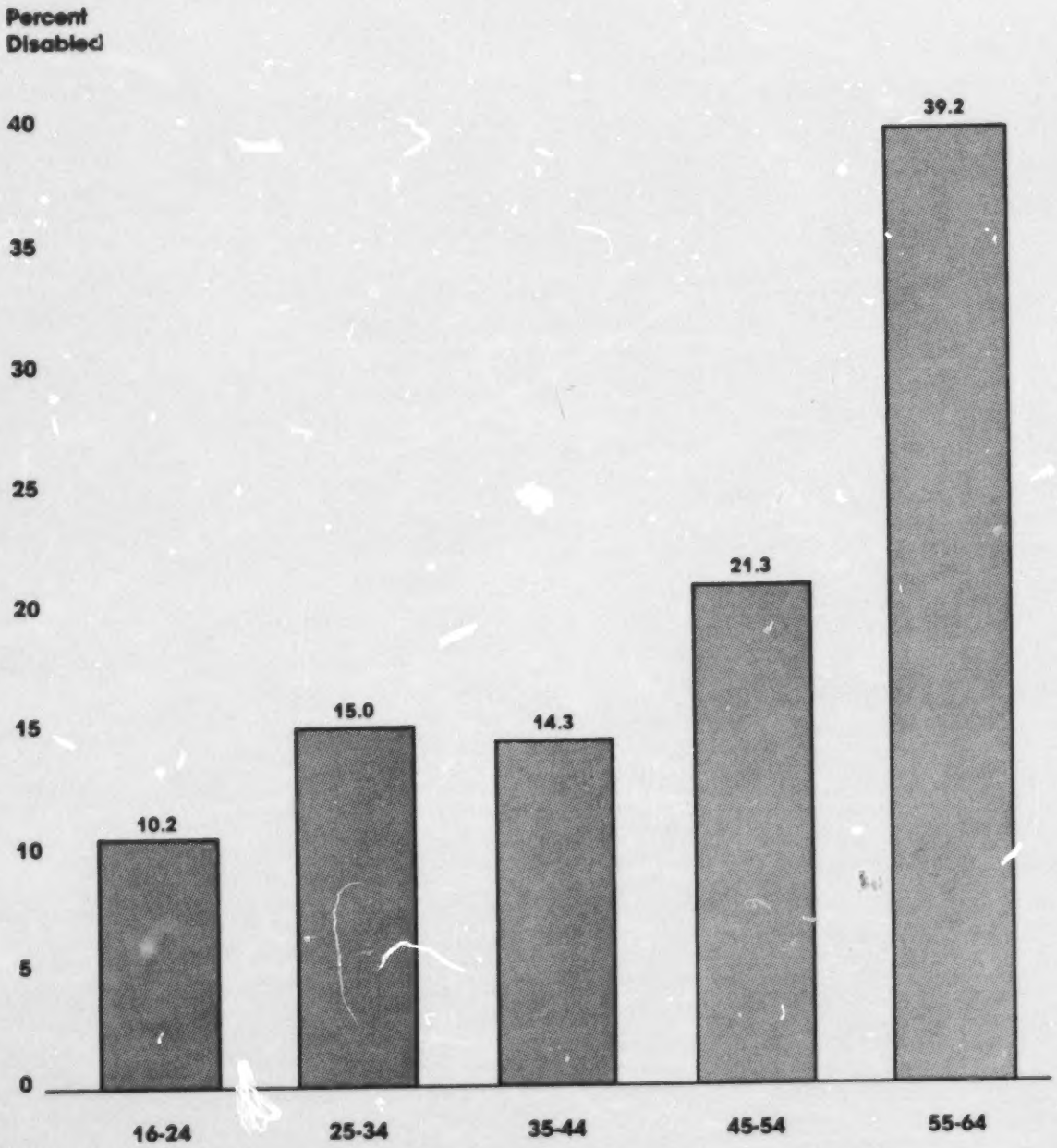
Proportions Disabled



Disability is markedly more common among blacks than among persons of other races.

Source: 1981 CPS

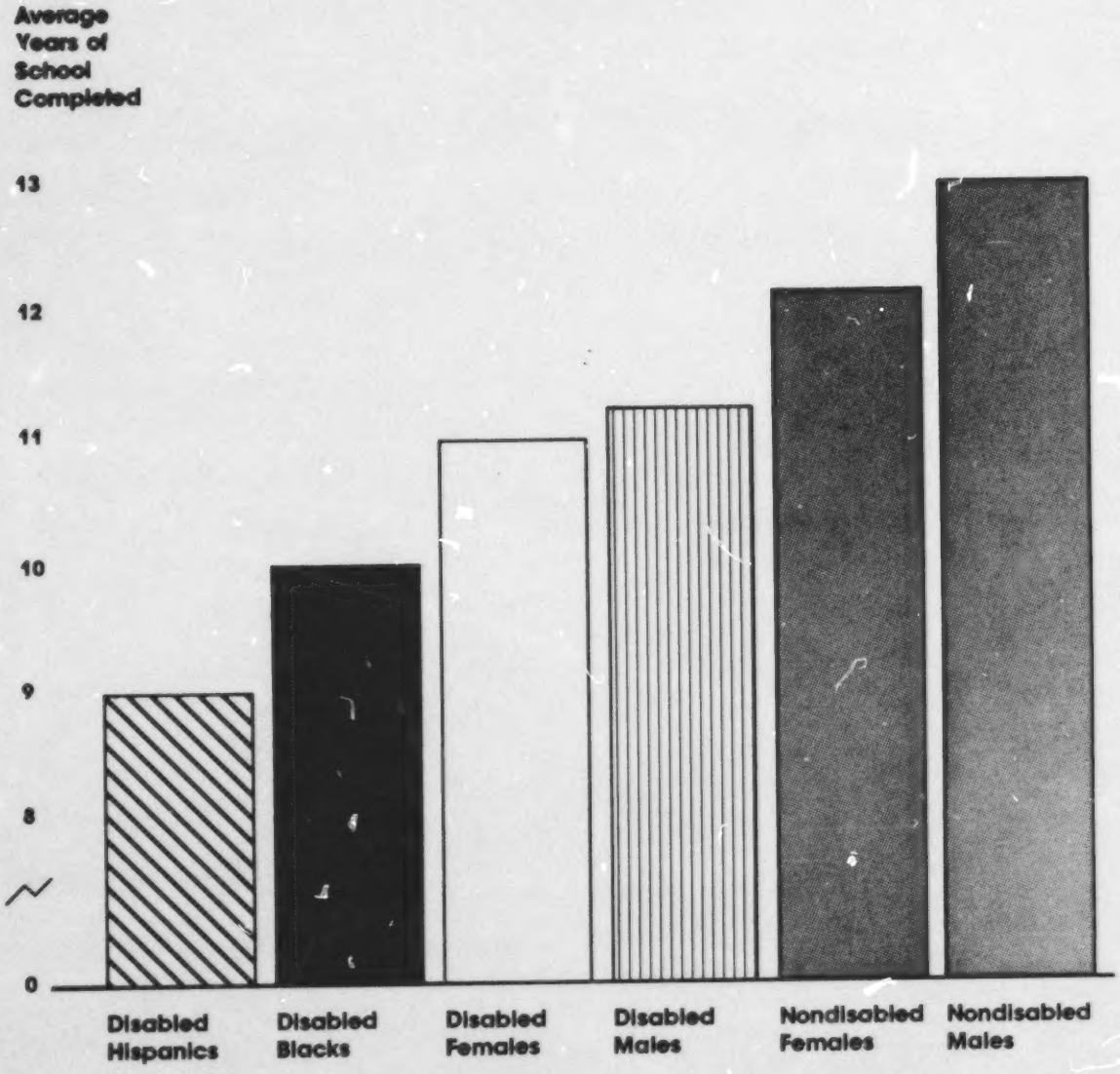
Age Distribution



Six disabled Americans of working-age in every ten (60.5%) are between the ages of 45 and 64.

Source: 1981 CPS

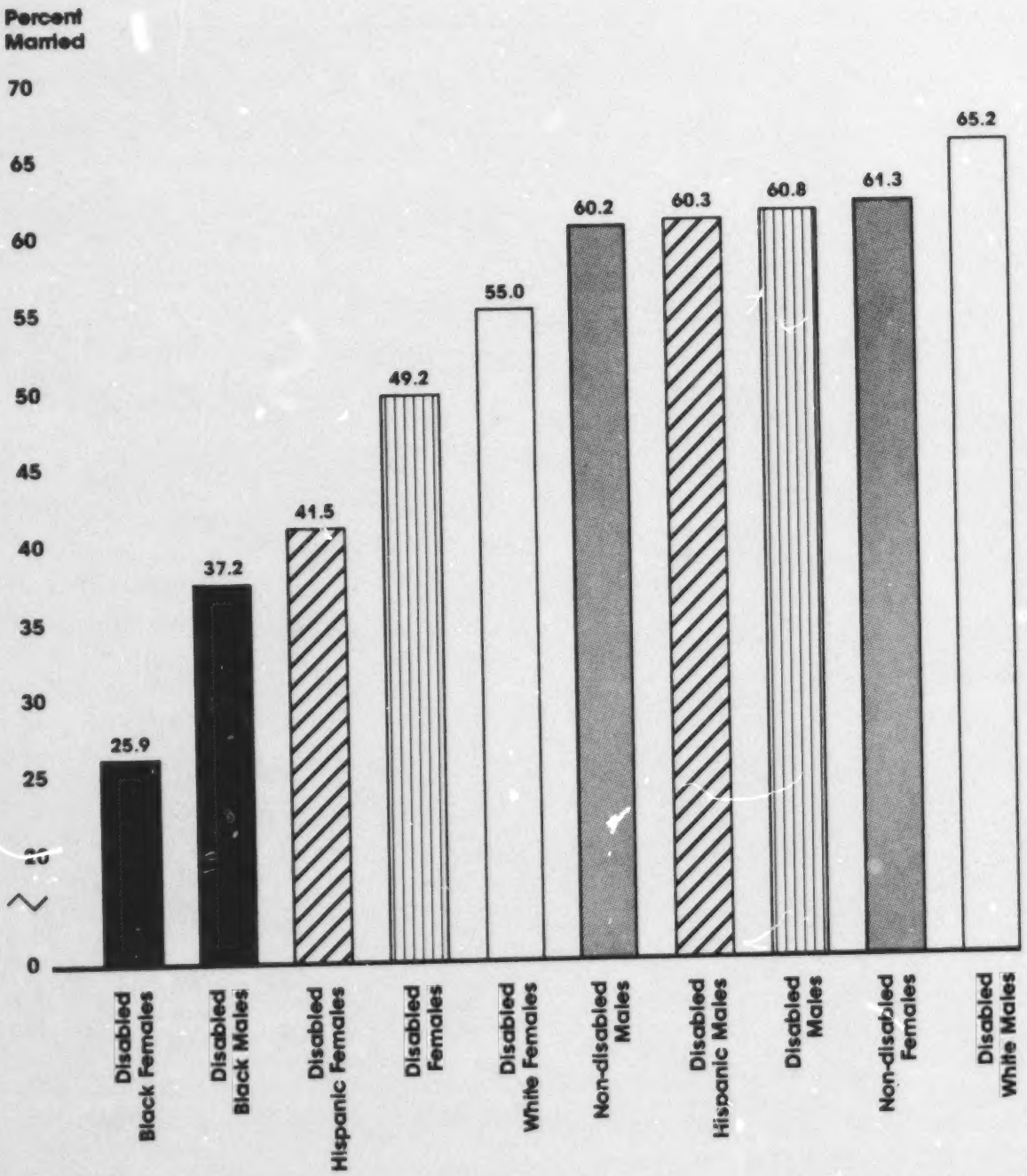
Education



Disabled persons tend to be less well-educated than persons who are not disabled.

Source: 1981 CPS

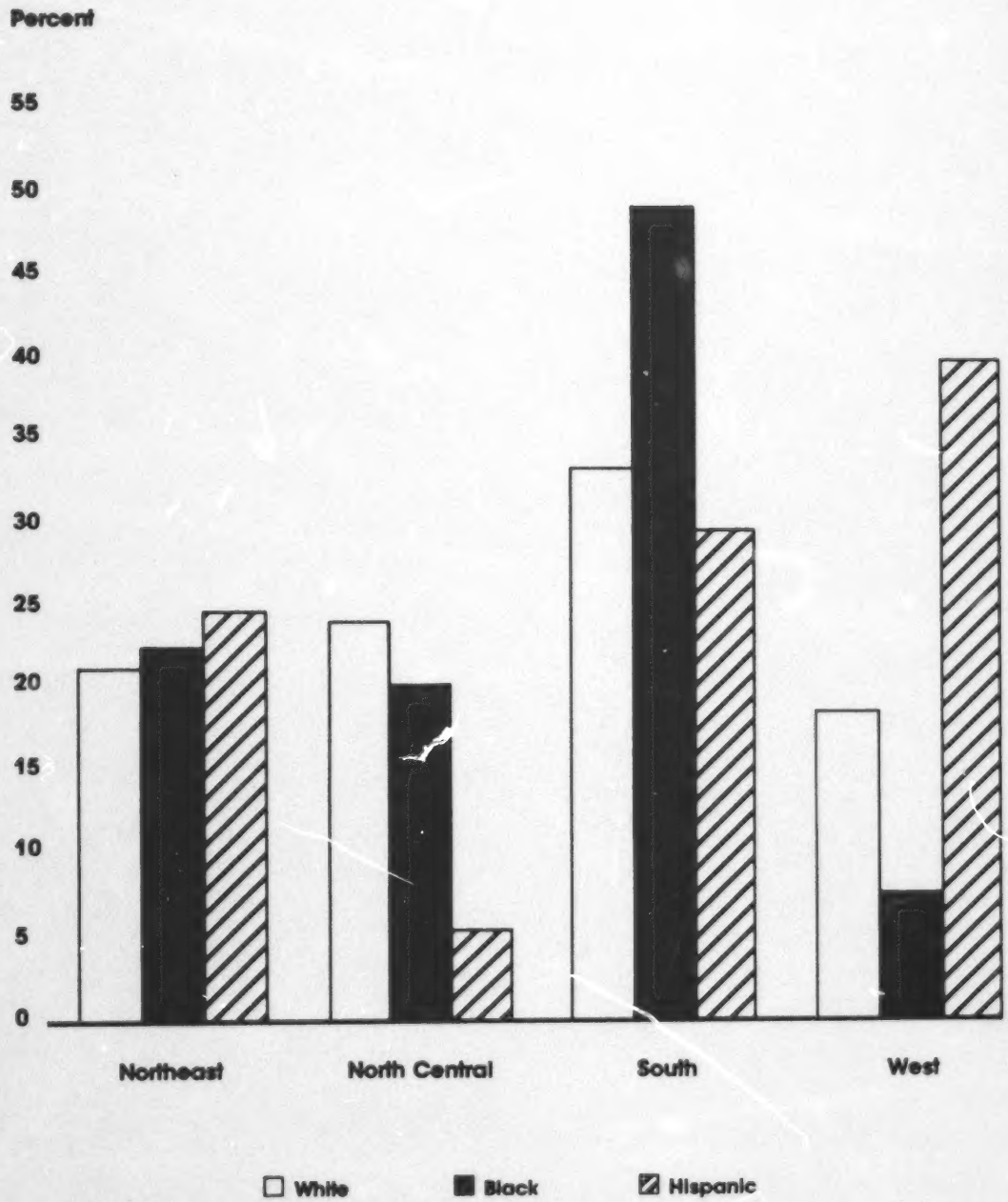
Marriage



Some disabled persons, especially women, lack the support a spouse can offer in life and in rehabilitation.

Source: 1981 CPS

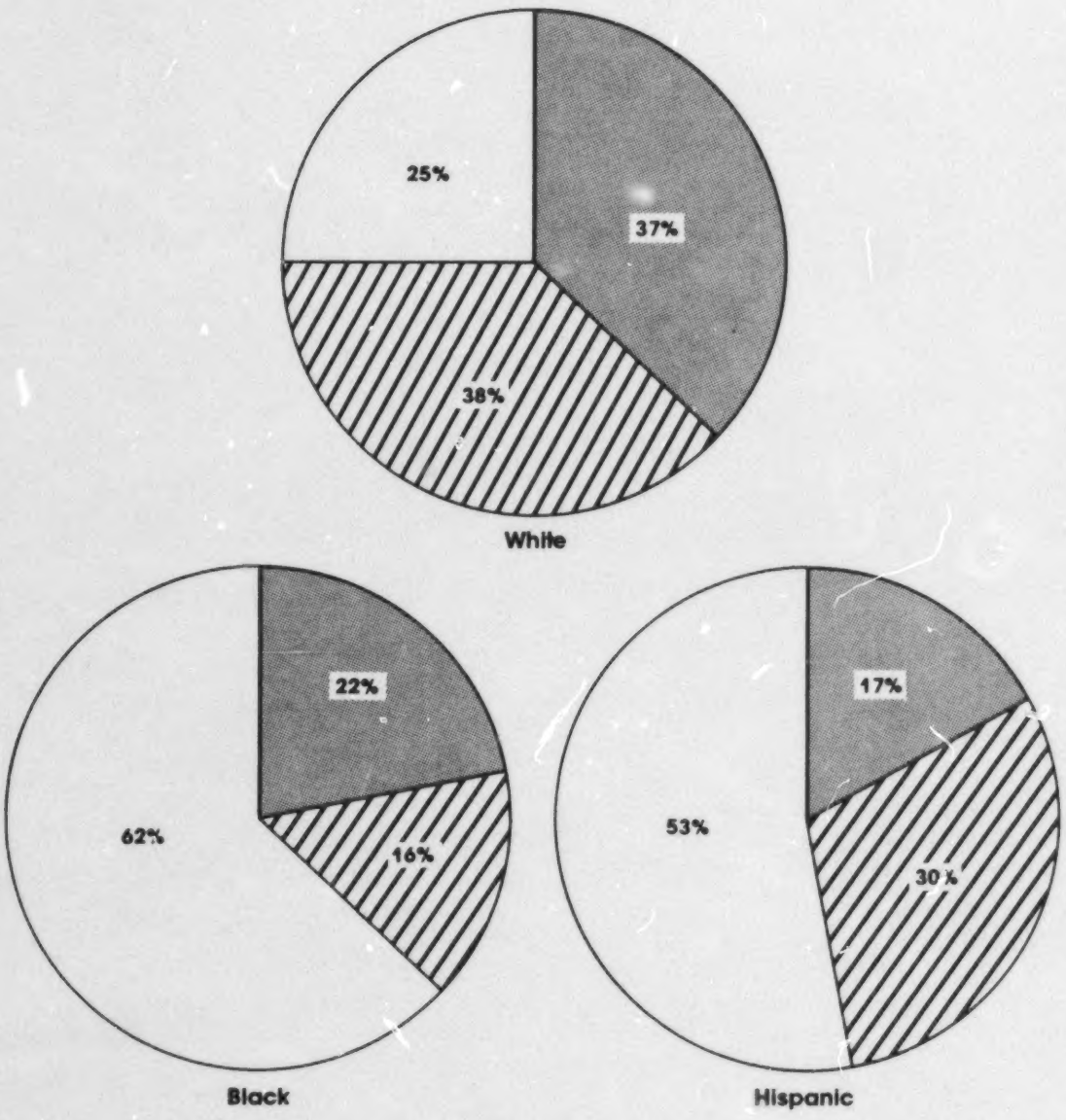
Geographical Distribution



Disabled blacks tend to live in the South, disabled Hispanics in the West, while disabled whites are more evenly distributed in all four regions.

Source: 1981 CPS

Residence

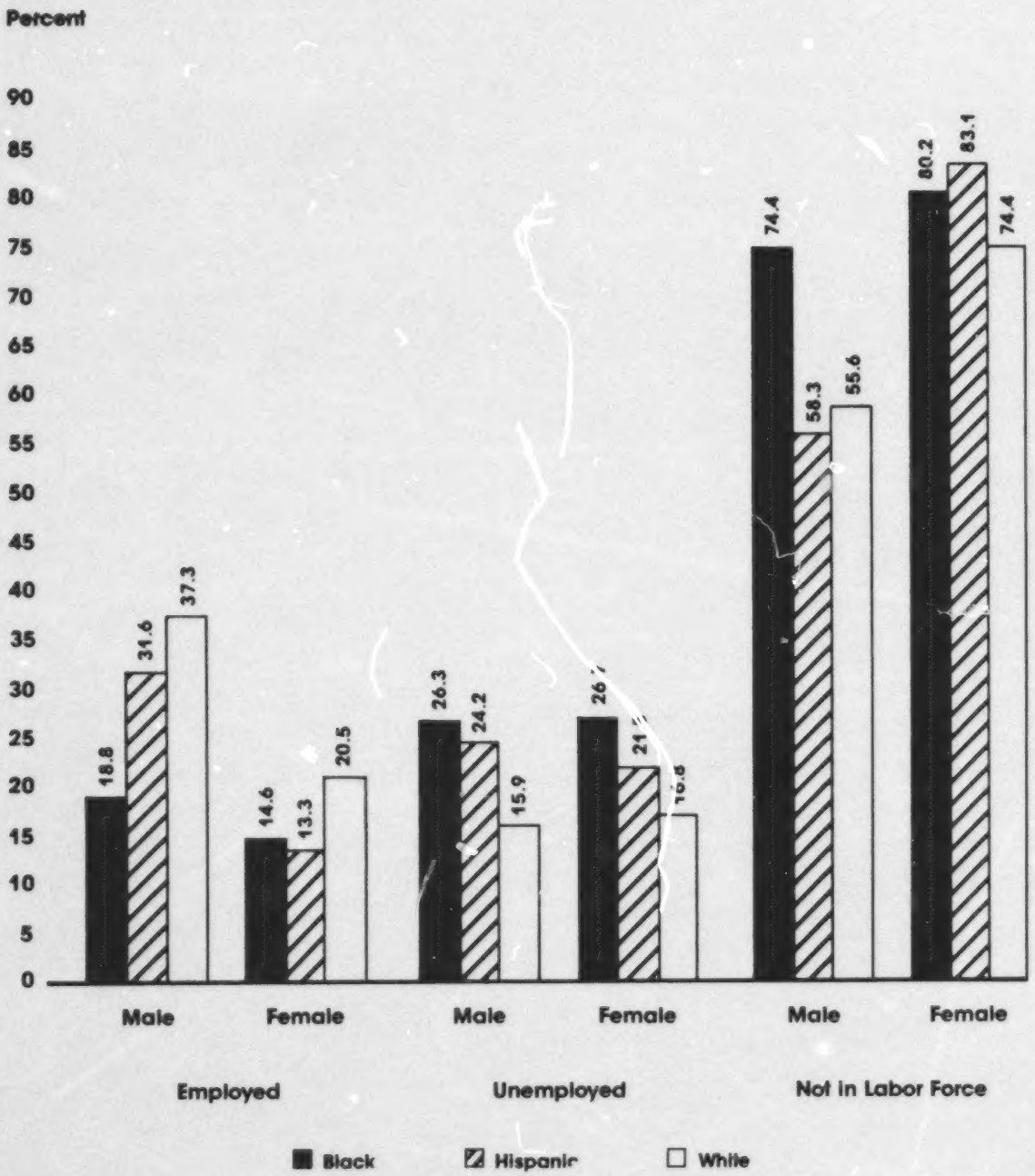


*Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area, see Technical Notes.

Disabled blacks and Hispanics tend to live in central cities, while whites tend to reside in suburbs or exurbs.

Source: 1981 CPS

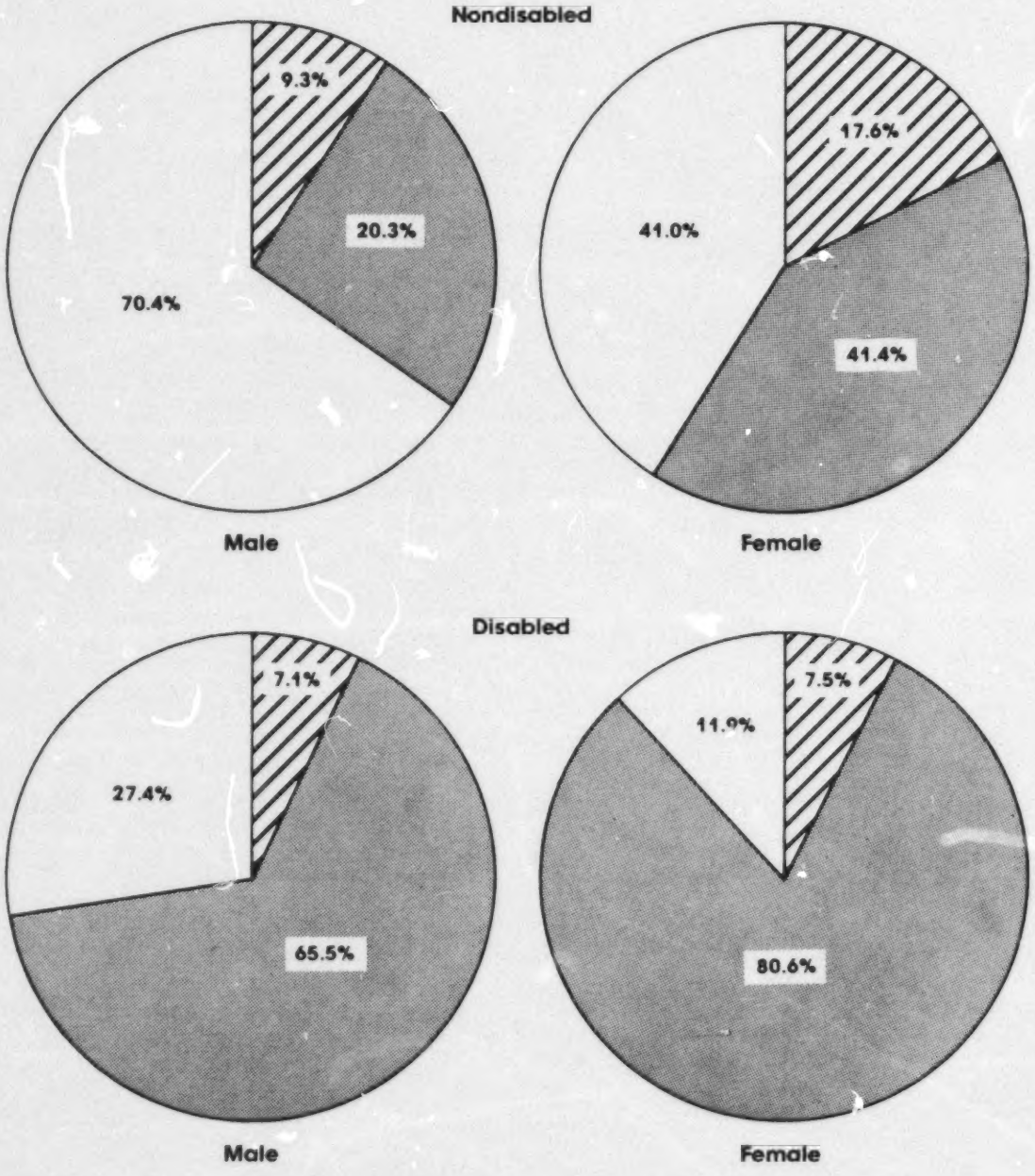
Labor Force and Employment Status



Most disabled persons are not in the labor force.

Source: 1981 CPS

Proportions Employed

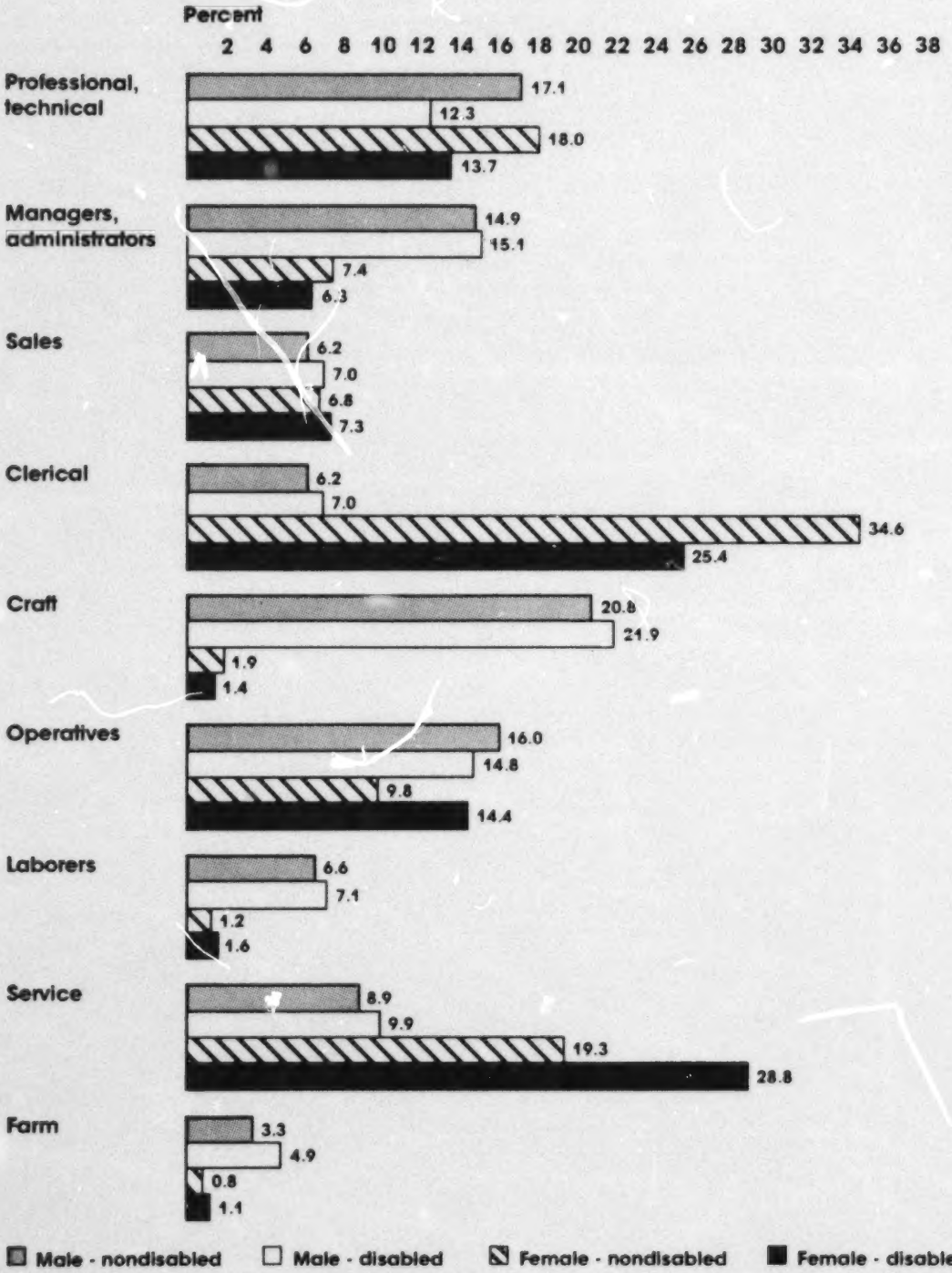


Note: "Not employed" includes persons unemployed as well as persons not in the labor force.

Disabled persons work less frequently than do others of working age.

Source: 1981 CPS

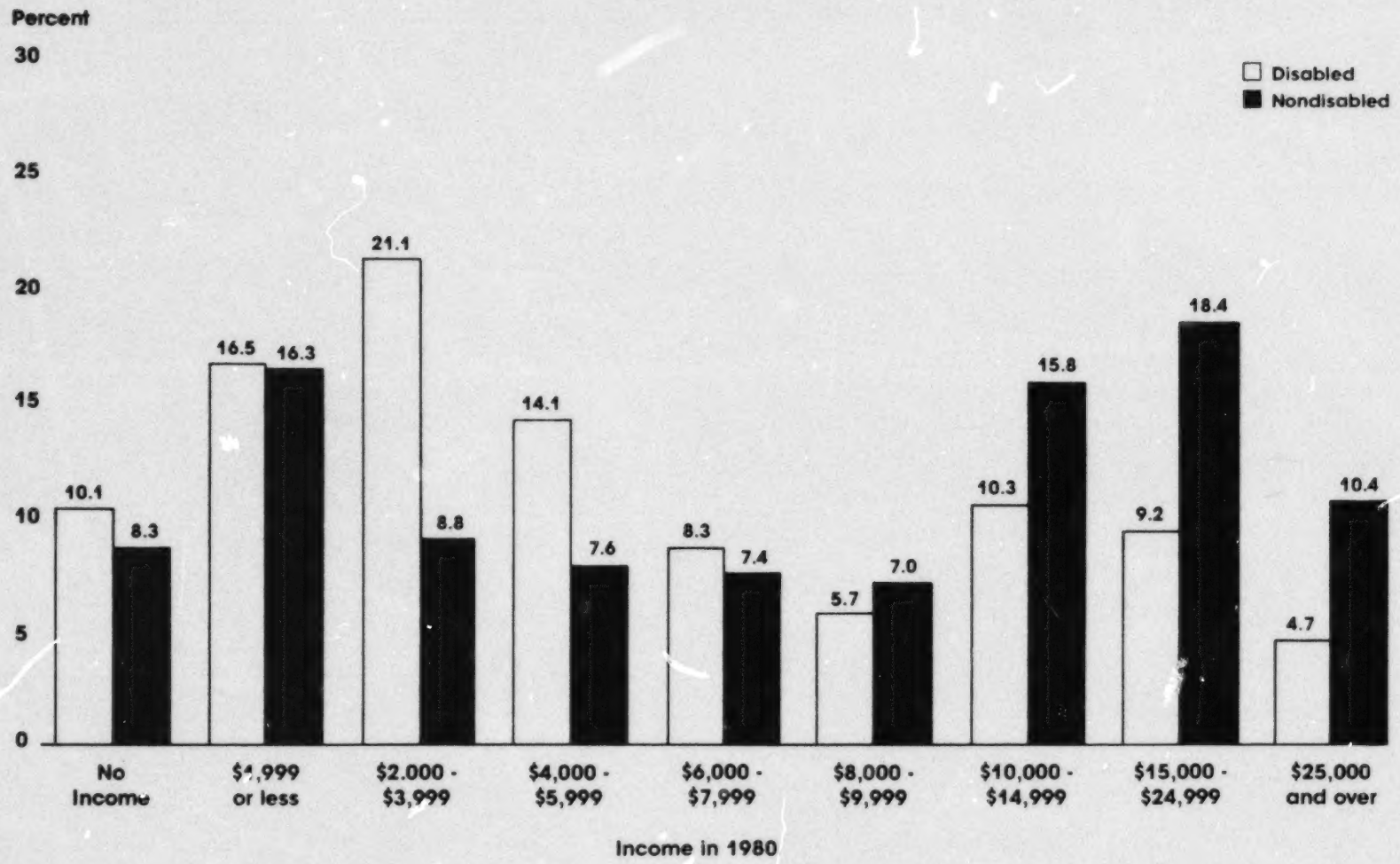
Occupational Category



Disabled adults tend to have the same kinds of jobs as do other adults, although disabled women are more frequently found in service occupations than are nondisabled women.

Source: 1982 CPS

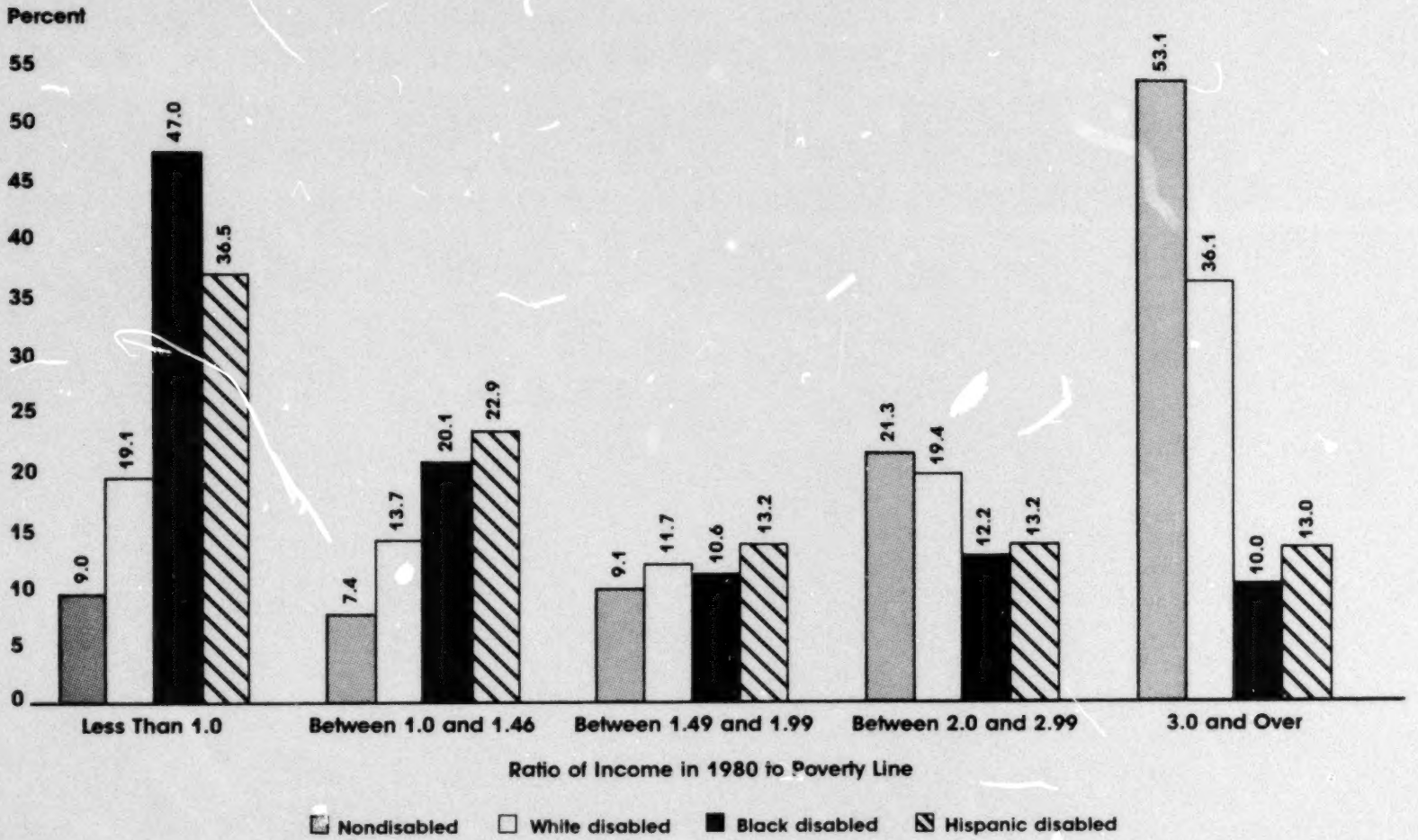
Income



Almost half (47.7%) of disabled adults had incomes from all sources in 1980 of less than $4,000.

Source: 1981 CPS

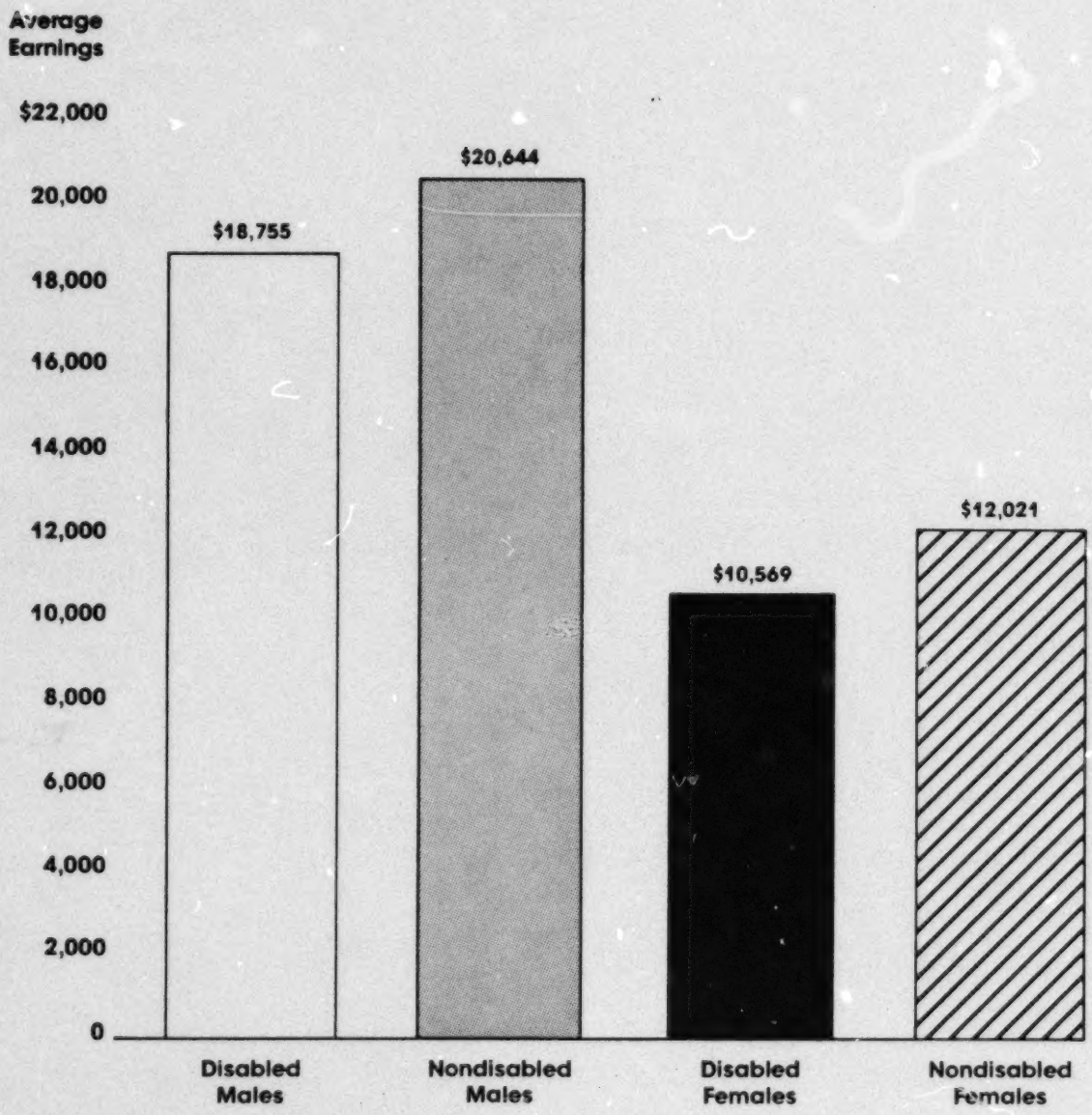
Income to Poverty Line



Almost half of all disabled blacks, and more than one-third of all disabled Hispanics had incomes from all sources in 1980 that were below the poverty level. By contrast, one-third of disabled whites had incomes at least three times the poverty level.

Source: 1981 CPS

Earnings



Disabled persons working full-time earned almost as much as did their non-disabled peers who worked full-time in 1980.

Source: 1981 CPS

Some Implications for Rehabilitation

1. **Outreach and Recruitment.** Perhaps rehabilitation should place more emphasis upon recruiting into the federal-state partnership program those persons who become disabled while working. These individuals represent the bulk of the population.

   While only one American in every twenty-seven (3.3%) in the 16-24 age-range has a disability, the proportion rises steadily to 29.7% in the 65-74 age-range. Placing primary outreach emphasis upon recruiting persons who have already been in the labor force would help rehabilitation reach more eligible individuals than would a predominant stress upon outreach to school-leavers.

2. **Older Persons.** Six disabled adults of working age in every ten are between the ages of 45 and 64. Someone reaching the age of 60 today can expect to live to be 80. At the same time, mandatory retirement ages have been raised to 70—and in some cases eliminated entirely. Perhaps rehabilitation should consider more service for older disabled individuals.

   Ten years ago, placing primary focus upon services for younger individuals made much more sense than it does today.

   On the other hand, very high rates of unemployment among younger disabled adults suggest that these persons, more than is the case with older individuals, are actively seeking jobs. They may be more receptive to rehabilitation than are older individuals.

3. **Retraining.** For most persons of working age who have disabilities, the major need is for retraining rather than for basic training. Most already have considerable work experience. They require help in learning to adjust to the disability. Many also need assistance in learning new and different work skills.

   Employers' demands are changing. While large numbers of disabled persons have work histories featuring operation of equipment and physical labor, fewer and fewer jobs require those kinds of abilities. This emphasizes the urgency of retraining for many disabled persons.

4. **Women.** In the 1970's women moved into the labor market in very large numbers. Today, more than half of all working-age women work. Women with disabilities, however, did not keep pace. Fewer than one in five works.

   Yet those who do work tend to do well. Full-time employed disabled women earn almost as much as do other women working full-time.

5. **Blacks.** A major need, particularly in the South, is to help more disabled blacks secure the education, training, and employment they need to reach their potentials. Fully one-seventh of the entire black adult population is disabled—and 49% of those 2.21 million persons live in the South.

6. **SSDI/SSI Recipients.** Most disabled adults of working age neither worked nor were seeking work when census interviewers contacted them. Yet the vast majority of these persons are poor. They may well be receptive to rehabilitation if they can be shown that employment is a realistic possibility.

   The major disincentives to work facing SSDI and SSI recipients were removed in 1980. Yet most such recipients apparently do not believe it is feasible to invest in employment-related endeavors. At about the same time, the Social Security reimbursement to rehabilitation agencies for services to recipients began declining for technical and financial reasons. Rehabilitation may be well advised to communicate about work incentives to SSDI/SSI recipients—and to attempt to remove technical and funding obstacles to helping these persons receive training and placement assistance.

7. **Employment.** Probably the most encouraging news from the 1981 and 1982 CPS studies is the finding that full-time employed disabled persons earn almost as much as do full-time workers with no disabilities.

It can be done—and often is.

Rehabilitation may want to communicate these facts to employers and persons with disabilities alike. And then move to help more persons do what to date only a few have achieved.

8. **Independent Living.** Centers for independent living are proving to be effective with younger disabled individuals. The CPS data show that almost one-quarter of all persons aged 55-64 have disabilities; those over 65 years of age are disabled in almost three out of ten of the instances. With independent living services, many more could remain in the community, at a much lower cost to society. Perhaps it is time to extend the independent living approach to older Americans.

9. **Cost/Effectiveness.** If most disabled working-age adults do not work, where does their income come from? With more than nine million persons with disabilities not working among the 43 million working-age population of disabled Americans, the investment of government in their care and subsistence each year must be very substantial. Rehabilitation may be well-advised to calculate such costs and to compare them with the amounts that would be incurred in rehabilitating to work a given number of those persons. Those totals may then be set against the reduced sums required from such governmental assistance programs as SSDI and SSI to demonstrate how rehabilitation can do good well—help people who need help while saving government money.

Technical Notes

1. **Source:** Material on the size of the population, other major characteristics of the population, proportions employed, and occupational category is from the 1982 Current Population Survey; other material comes from the 1981 CPS. The two surveys were close in their findings but not all 1982 data were available when this publication went to press.

2. **Minority Groups:** Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race. When the CPS sample is segmented by race, sex, disability status, and employment status, the numbers in the cells are too small for confident analysis of employment patterns by race. Accordingly, earnings of employed disabled blacks and Hispanics are not offered in this report.

3. **SMSA:** A Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area consists of a "central city" of 50,000 or more population, plus the adjacent counties. In 1980, there were 284 SMSAs in the United States.

4. **Unemployed:** Unemployment is expressed as a proportion of persons in the labor force who were looking for work in the reference week period but could not find it.

5. **Disability:** Work disability was defined by the CPS as a health problem which prevented the individual from working or which limited that person in the amount or kind of work he/she could perform. Persons were also counted as work-disabled if they did not work in the reference week because of long-term disability which prevents performance of any kind of work; if they did not work at all in the previous year because ill or disabled; if they had a service-connected disability or ever retired or left a job because of health reasons; if they were under age 65 and covered by Medicare; or if they were under age 65 and received SSI.

Endpage

Demography and Disability offers an overview of the United States working-age population of persons with disabilities, drawing upon very current data.

As often is the case with chartbooks, some readers will find their desire for information whetted rather than satiated by this volume. If you want more information, we encourage you to contact the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, Washington, D.C. 20210, and request **Disabled Adults in America, Disabled Women in America, Black Adults with Disabilities,** and **Disabled Adults of Hispanic Origin.**

You may also write directly to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C. 20233 for additional information.

For a comprehensive technical report on the 1982 CPS, send $4.50 to the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington D.C. 20402 for:

U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports
Series P-23, No. 127, **Labor Force Status and Other Characteristics of Persons With a Work Disability: 1982,** USGPO, 1983.

All programs administered by and services provided by the Arkansas Rehabilitation Research and Training Center are rendered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to handicap, race, creed, color, sex, or national origin in compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. All applicants for program participation and/or services have a right to file complaints and to appeal according to regulations governing this principle.